HOW The GAME of SOCIAL BLUFF is played in WASHINGTON

Many "Climbers," Without Standing and Minus Money, Gradually Work Their Way Into the "Swim," First Gaining the Confidence of Their Senators and Representatives and Then Hiring Autos, Leasing Mansions and Giving Entertainments Until the Crash Comes and They Fade Away.

MRS. TOMPKINS INTRODUCING A DIPLOMAT TO HER DAUGHTER, MISS MIRABEL.
This Is One of the First Steps a "Climber" Tries in the Interesting Game of Social Bluff.

NOBODY WHO knows the ins and outs of Washington society will deny that there are always a goodly number of persons moving in it entirely "on their nerve."

The game of social "bluff" seems a popular one in the Capital city, where so many strangers are always arriving, and where it is comparatively easy to "butt in."

While numerous specific instances of the playing of this game might be cited, to show how it is usually done, a hypothetical case will be taken.

An Ambitious Trio.

Suppose Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Tompkins, of Springfield, are ambitious, in behalf of their fine looking daughter, aged twenty-four, to enter Washington's social swim. They come of no family of particular importance in the present generation and have only a little ready money. This the trio will use to keep up appearances for a while, until they have had their little while in the social maelstrom at the Capital, only to drop out of sight and into oblivion when their purse is empty.

That there are persons of such featherweight caliber would seem incredible were it not demonstrated right here in the city, time and time again.

To such people would be applicable the following quotation regarding a certain nonentity in a man's form:

"If he should jump from a shot tower onto a wet sponge on the ground he wouldn't squeeze out a drop of water."

Register at Leading Hotel.

Arrived in Washington, the first move of the Tompkins family is to register at a leading hotel, where acquaintances of importance will be promptly sought. Of course this can be accomplished with a little callousness and the enduring of a round snubbing now and then.

But the family has come for the express purpose of "butting in," and there will be no stopping them by the use of the cold shoulder. The Tompkinses are not only social climbers, but pushers, as well.

Mr. Tompkins is what is known among traveling men as "a good mixer." Mrs. Tompkins, although her voice is harsh, her grammar imperfect and her manner somewhat loud, has cultivated a lot of small talk and steadfastly believes she is "up on culture." She can already name half of the most noted paintings in the Corcoran Art Gallery, even though she does wofully mispronounce the names of the artists.

Miss Mirabel Tompkins speaks in too high a key and too rapidly to impress any of the set she longs to mingle with, but she has a certain sort of doll-like beauty and freshness, and is audacity itself.

So the members of the family are pretty well equipped for the kind of social campaign they are inaugurating.

Seek Their Senator.

Of course, Mr. Tompkins makes a bee-line for his Senator and Representative in Congress. These patient men never heard of him in Springfield, but Tompkins appears to be so well posted on politics, State and national, that the Congressmen soon come to the conclusion that it would be bad policy to extend to him "the marble mitt." So they grit their teeth and endure his vulgarity and back-slapping.

Tompkins forces himself upon these politicians, and does them so many little kindnesses that it is not long before they begin to mentally decide: "This man Tompkins isn't so bad."

Next they actually begin to feel under obligations to him.

That is the psychological moment for which Tompkins has been waiting with crafty eye. He recognizes that state of mind, while it is yet nebulous, and forthwith proceeds to press his vantage.

Learning Who's Who.

Meanwhile Mrs. Tompkins and Miss Mirabel have not been idle. They have poked around in blue-books and asked questions of the hotel chambermaids until they have a hazy idea of who's who in the many social sets.

The Tompkinses, of course, do not want to know any of the aristocratic old "cave-dwellers," who live on memories and whose greatest boast is heirlooms; they prefer to go with a more "rapid" coterie; to see and be seen, and always to do something "dashing."

Mrs. Tompkins and her daughter make a few "rather swell" Washington acquaintances at the hotel, and curry favor with them. They have had prepared dinner gowns Miss Mirabel terms "dead stunning" and tip heavily the waiters that they may have ostentatious attention at table. Especially do they seek the intimacy of the wives and daughters of Senators, Representatives or diplomats who may have just come to Washington and who have happened to stop at the Tompkinses' hotel.

The Tompkins family "allows" whispers to get about that fabulous wealth is behind them. That the members want a good time and don't care what it costs them.

Hiring "Our New Auto."

"Papa" Tompkins "makes a dicker" with a garage manager for a handsome big motor car with a resonant French horn. It has no appearance of being a "livery rig." That is one of the main stipulations in the agreement. Even the hired chauffeur is a special man and not on the "regular trick," which might give the snap away.

The first blow struck by the Tompkins outfit for social prestige is a ride in "our new auto," given to a diplomat and his wife, who don't want to go, but have become tired of snubbing the family without being quite insulting.

A little dinner party at the hotel—"Oh do come over to our table, this evening—"

And the poison is working.

A box party at the theater with Mr. and Mrs. Diplomat dragged in, is the next step.

Next day, each of the Washington newspapers receives a neat little angular note intended for insertion among the society notices:

"Mr. and Mrs. B. I. Tompkins, of Springfield, and daughter, Miss Mirabel, gave a box party at the New National last night, in honor of their friends, Mr. and Mrs. Ordinary Diplomat."

Then the Tompkinses pat one another on the back when the notices appear in print.

"We're doin' fine," says Mr. Tompkins, puffing hard at his 50-cent cigar.

Begging Big Game.

When a very noted man, entitled to wear a corsage and stomacher of decorations, arrives at the hotel, Mr. and Mrs. Ordinary Diplomat are allowed no peace until the Tompkinses have been duly introduced.

'Nother blow home.

Mr. Extraordinary Diplomat, in a few days' campaigning, is bundled into "our new auto," and the theater party and newspaper notice acts are encored.

"We're doin' —— fine," this time gleefully remarks "Papa" Tompkins.

The persuader is put to the Extraordinary and Ordinary Diplomats, and the game goes merrily on.

Their friends' friends are rope-d in, and Miss Mirabel is beginning to have a nice little circle in which to perform, "Papa" and "Mamma" Tompkins leave no stone unturned. One of the diplomats has even borrowed $500 from "Papa." It is fairly raining newspaper notices now.

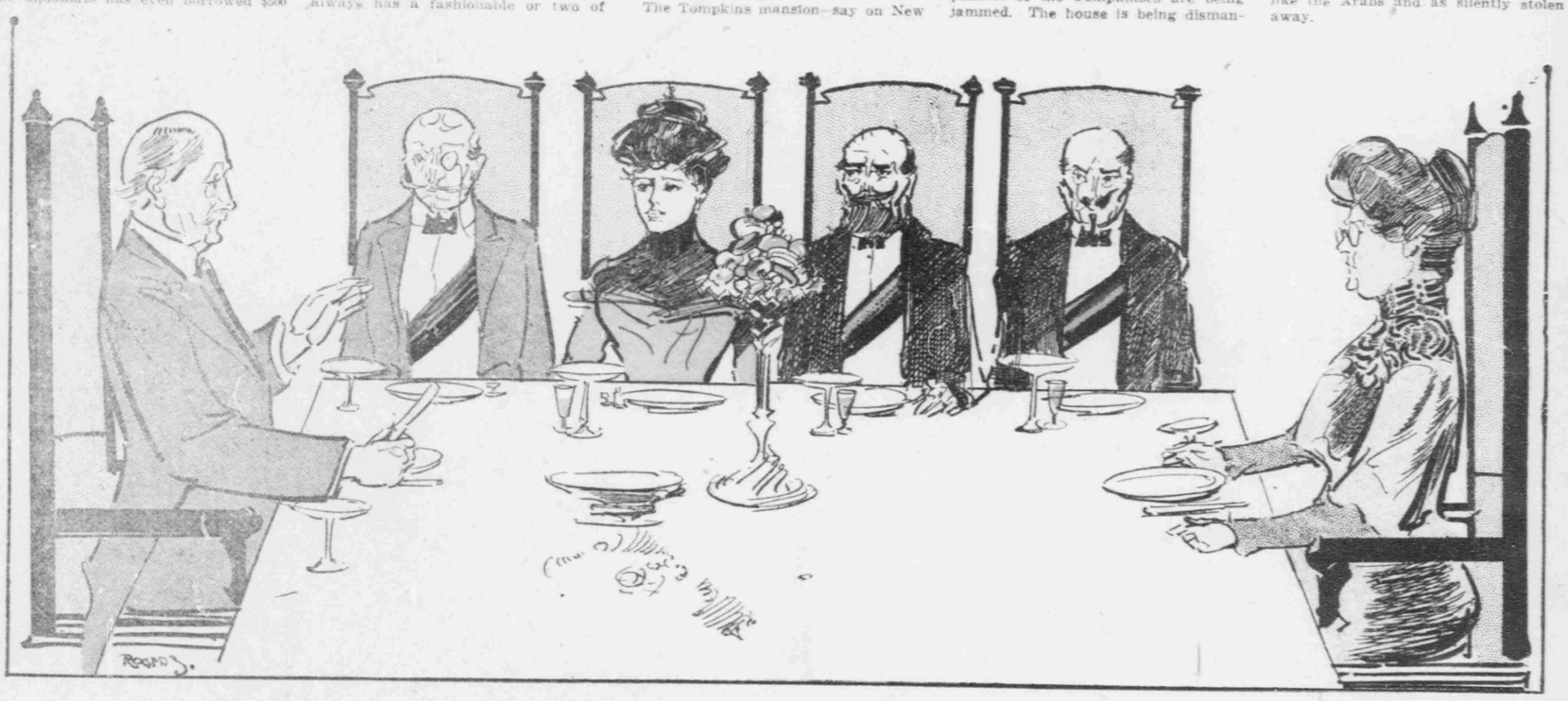
There are more theater parties, and the Tompkinses are now actually beginning to be invited out, that obligations may be repaid.

"Papa" Tompkins nervously pulls the rubber band off his "roll," counts it, smiles reassuringly at his wife, and starts out to find a real estate agent.

Selecting a Mansion.

He selects an imposing house at an imposing price in a fashionable quarter, and, by dickering with all his ingenuity, finally rents it for three months. A newspaper notice straightway appears that the Tompkinses have taken a lease of Senator Blank's late home for a term of two years.

Running up a line of credit at the butcher's, baker's, and candlestick-makers' and florist's is not an arduous task after this, especially as the auto, which stops in front of these places, by some singular circumstance, always has a fashionable or two of wealth and standing leaning back against the cushions.



THE TOMPKINS' FAMILY DINING A TRIO OF UNWILLING AND BORED CELEBRITIES.
Showing Another Means of Gradually Getting Into "The Swim" in the Capital City.

"In the Swim" at Last.

Almost before they realize it themselves, the Tompkinses are quite "in the swim." They are on friendly terms with a number of the diplomatic set, a few of the official set, and several of the army and navy set. Other coteries have been pried into with some success, and the Tompkinses have two engraving houses busy running off cards, that they may keep up with their engagements.

At fashionable dinners Miss Mirabel sits "next" to diplomats and notables, boldly holding her own, doing a deal of "joshing."

"Mamma" Tompkins is telling some dowager about her "chef in Springfield" and "Papa" Tompkins is even borrowing money from his Senator, and, after dinner, will win twice the amount from him at cards.

The Tompkins mansion—say on New Hampshire avenue—is alight from basement to garret every evening; there is hardly an hour in the afternoon in which either an auto or a carriage with a prancing pair does not stop before the door and colored messengers are daily bringing long pasteboard boxes from the florist's for Miss Mirabel.

All through one social season the Tompkins enjoy their little fling. Long-waiting creditors are either staved or "bluffed" off with promises.

Then, one day the crash comes.

Into huge vans in front of "the Tompkins' mansion" the lares and penates of the Tompkinses are being jammed. The house is being dismantled in a twinkling.

Callers are told that the Tompkinses have been called away suddenly, by the death of a millionaire aunt, and that they will soon return.

This for the creditors' benefit.

By evening the home is empty. No one knows where the Tompkinses have gone.

Many would like to know—and they have their reasons.

But the Tompkinses have enjoyed at least one good time that hard-working old B. I. long had promised his wife and daughter.

Now they have folded their tents like the Arabs and as silently stolen away.

Fashionable Washington wakes up and begins to ask the question which it would have been well to ask at the outset:

"Who on earth are the Tompkinses?"

THE TOMPKINSES ENTERTAINING USEFUL AND DISTINGUISHED GUEST AT A BOX PARTY.
This Is One of the Most Successful Methods of Bagging Big Game in the Social Hunt.

Biggest Known Aid Society In the World

IN a room over the "Bird in Hand," a small saloon in London's Long Acre, twelve men met one night in July sixty-four years ago. They were workingmen, and had as leader John Hadley, a carpenter.

The men formed themselves into a sick benefit club—that is, a society from which any one of them could draw money in case of illness. They called it "Hearts of Oak," that was the general term of the period for the British sailor.

The dozen men pledged themselves to enroll as many friends as possible. The room over the saloon was rented for one night each week, and in a year the membership of a dozen had grown to one of 154, and a reserve fund of nearly $300 had been established.

Today the "Hearts of Oak" has 300,000 members and the reserve fund is over $16,000,000. The annual income is over $3,500,000, and $3,500 is paid out in sick and other benefits every working day of the year.

This phenomenal growth and success has, however, not been reached without much hard work, much hard fighting, strife, and turmoil, and the assistance of at least two men with big brains and great executive powers.

One of these was Evan Evans, a Welsh artisan and the most hated man in the annals of the society. The other was Thomas Marshall, nephew of the Marshall famous in the history of the Bank of England, and unquestionably the man most loved and revered by the "Hearts of Oak." Both are now dead, but their memories will live.

Evans joined the society two years after its inception. He had a master mind and soon grasped the possibilities of such an organization. He quickly ousted the originator, John Hadley, and became secretary. In England it is the secretary who holds the reins of general manager, not the president.

Evans was the dominant power for nearly twenty-five years. It was he who threw aside the local environment idea and said: "We will take in the British workman throughout Britain."

He did. Advertisements were inserted in provincial, Welsh, Irish, and Scottish papers, setting forth the benefits of the society, and members flocked to its standard. Evans rented the room over the saloon by the year, and soon afterward the remainder of the house. Here he brought the membership up to 9,000.

The old rules of the little local sick benefit club proved entirely inadequate to the needs of what was now a big national society, so Evans became a czar, elected his own committee of management and ruled with a strong hand.

For ten years all went well, but in 1851 the storm broke, the members revolted and the next ten years were ones of storm and stress indeed. For nine years Evans refused to call a general meeting of the society, and, moreover, allowed no member access to the books.

By 1862 the society had risen to a membership of 10,000, and the offices over the saloon were much too small to transact the business. So Evans bought a four-story building in Greek street, Soho. It had also a very commodious basement. To this building the society was removed. It was its first "own home," and was a splendid move, for in the eleven years' occupancy the membership grew sevenfold.

In 1872 the Greek street premises were found too small, and a block of houses in Charlotte street, Fitzroy square, was purchased and reconstructed. All this cost about $100,000.

The membership, when the new building was finally occupied in 1875, had reached 50,000. In the next ten years it jumped to over 150,000, and in 1904 was 285,000, and again the premises were found too small. So a new site was purchased on Euston road, and the society started in to build its own home.

Quite recently King Edward, accompanied by Queen Alexandra and Princess Victoria, opened the new building with all the glory that royalty and military can show. All London lined the streets as royalty went from Buckingham palace to honor the British workingman, and thousands jammed the streets surrounding the new building.

At night the famous Guildhall glittered with brilliancy, when the lord mayor and civic grandees gave a mammoth banquet to celebrate the occasion. Princes, generals, admirals, noblemen, distinguished prelates, and professional men gathered to laud the "Hearts of Oak" and the British workingman.

The benefits received by the members of the society nowadays are not merely the sick benefit originally planned. The member pays an entrance fee of 60 cents, and a doctor's examination fee of 50 cents, and then quarterly dues of $2.25. He must be between the ages of eighteen and thirty when he joins, and his wages must be not less than $5 per week.

The sick benefit is $4.50 per week for twenty-six weeks, and then half-pay for another twenty-six weeks. If more or less permanently sick, the member would be put on the pay roll at a sum dependent on his years of membership.

On the death of a member, $100 is paid to his family for his funeral, and if married $50 is given to his wife. Should his wife die, the society provides $50 for the funeral.

NIGHTHAWKS.

Some won't go home till morning,
Some won't go home at all—
And when they do they softly sneak
Their shoes off in the hall!

—Baltimore Sun.